

## CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

### FOR

### ACQUISITION SUPPORT TEAM (AST)

This concept of operations (CONOPS) establishes the organizational structure, working relationships, and procedures for the Ogden ALC Acquisition Support Team (AST) formerly the, the Request for Proposal Support Organization (RFPSO). The AST is formed to meet the objectives of Acquisition Reform. The CONOPS is updated to include new responsibilities outlined in Lightning Bolt 99-1, 99-2, and 99-3. This document supersedes Concept of Operations approved by OO-ALC/CC on 24 Aug 95.

1.0 GENERAL: This section describes the purpose of the OO-ALC AST, provides its framework, sets forth its responsibilities and authorities and outlines the implementation procedures.

1.1 PURPOSE: The OO-ALC AST is established to act as a service organization to assist program managers, and their Integrated Product Teams (IPT) in the full range of pre-award efforts, including market research, development of acquisition strategy, risk management, and source selections. Working in conjunction with the HQ AFMC/AQ Centralized Acquisition Support Team (CAST), the OO-ALC AST will reenergize and expand the existing acquisition and sustainment reform activities. SAF/AQ has initiated Lightning Bolt (LB) 99-1 to expand upon the services provided by the AST and to enhance their role and performance throughout all program pre-award activities. LB 99-2 was initiated to improve upon the quality of the source selection process by providing expert advisors to assist program teams planning source selections. Finally, LB 99-3 was issued to increase the emphasis on market research and price based acquisition on the requirements that are managed by each center. The OO-ALC AST will continue to institutionalize acquisition reform using lessons learned and best practices. The goal of the AST will be to ensure that OO-ALC supports its mission in a faster, better and cheaper manner. To achieve this objective, the AST is responsible for the following activities:

- a. Providing a multifunctional cadre of acquisition experts to facilitate acquisition document preparation and processing
- b. Providing guidance to program teams in the development of performance based acquisition strategies
- c. Improving upon the quality of the source selection process by providing expert advisors from several functional disciplines. These expert advisors will provide value added assistance to source selection teams in preparing source selection documentation, organization, execution, and post award debriefings
- d. Conducting and facilitating acquisition reform training that includes, IPT Team Building, Requirement Definition, Market Research & Price Based Acquisition, Risk Analysis, Statement of Objectives (SOO) development, Selecting Evaluation Criteria, and other training required by program teams to improve the acquisition process
- e. Establishing a Center of Expertise (COE) for market research and price based acquisition that will train and assist program teams or individuals in conducting market research and price based acquisition
- f. Employing the integrated acquisition streamlining process developed by the AST to help program teams implement AR on their source selection requirements
- g. Acting as a central repository for lessons learned and applying those lessons learned to future acquisitions

h. Reviewing acquisitions for opportunities to implement AR initiatives, such as consolidation of requirements, commercial equivalency, use of requirements contracts, and other streamlining techniques

**1.2 OBJECTIVES:** The following are the objectives in support of the OO-ALC AST mission and SAF/AQ's Lightning Bolt 99-1,99-2 and 99-3 initiatives:

a. Institutionalizing a performance based business environment throughout all efforts that procure supplies and services for OO-ALC

b. Expanding the role and services of the AST throughout all pre-award activities

c. Improving the consistency, quality, documentation, and debriefings on all source selections

d. Utilizing a multifunctional cadre of expert advisors that will participate in or be available to assist source selection teams

e. Increasing the emphasis on market research and price based acquisition by conducting a more comprehensive market research function early in the acquisition process providing more potential for using commercial products or practices.

f. Developing and implementing new processes, guides, checklists, and templates that provide program teams with the tools necessary to streamline their acquisition processes

**1.3 IMPLEMENTATION:** This CONOPS constitutes authority for the OO-ALC AST to operate within the outlined parameters. Requests for additions, or changes, will be submitted to the OO-ALC AST leader for evaluation and incorporation into this document.

**1.4 OPERATIONAL STRATEGY:** The following describes the basic operational strategy of the AST.

a. Early interface and training to IPTs and other individuals procuring supplies and services

b. Continuing interface/dialog with customers

c. Identification and documentation of lessons learned and best practices

d. Deployment of process improvements and all DoD acquisition reform initiatives

e. Measure results and continually improve AST performance

**1.5 MARKET ANALYSIS and PRICING CENTERS of EXPERTISE:** LB 99-3 requires the creation of Centers of Expertise (COE) to conduct market analysis and price analysis in support of commercial item acquisitions, the adoption of commercial practices, and price based acquisitions. Pilot programs will be established to test the market research concept where there appears to be high potential for adopting commercial products. It is planned to use landing gear spares buys over \$100,000 as the initial pilot program. Projected landing gear buy requirements will be screened for potential commercial equivalents or commercial practices. Based on the results of the pilot program the market research and price based acquisition concept will be expanded into other product items or altered as necessary. A market research training module will be developed to train individuals or acquisition teams on how to conduct market research. In addition, a market research expert and price based acquisition analyst will assist program teams in conducting market research by providing guidance and help at the beginning of the acquisition. A feature will be added to the AST web page that seeks information from industry relative to commercial equivalents for products listed or suggestions for improving the acquisition of the items. Best practices or lessons learned from other centers will be incorporated to improve the process.

**1.6 OVERSIGHT:** The AST leader and core members of the organization, together with on-call functional experts, will provide advice and assistance in their areas of expertise. The AST will be under the control of

the Contracting Directorate (PK) with the leader of the AST reporting to the PK Director. Members in the functional areas of expertise will be recruited from organizations across OO-ALC. As additional functional experts are needed, the AST will make recommendations for organizational changes to the Executive Council, who will determine the appropriate staffing changes. The Executive Council will then obtain approval from OO-ALC/CC for implementation.

**1.7 CRITERIA FOR UTILIZATION:** All acquisitions over \$500,000 and any source selection acquisition over \$100,000 must have active participation and assistance from the OO-ALC AST. The AST will conduct continuous random screening of purchase requests on all acquisitions (whether sole source, non-source selection competitive, or replenishment spares) for utilization of best practices, consolidation of requirements, performance based specs, commercial equivalency, etc.

#### **1.8 AST STRUCTURE:**

**1.8.1 AST LEADER:** The AST leader or manager will be appointed by the Executive Council and approved by OO-ALC/CC. The leader will be responsible for overall management and provide guidance to members of the AST regarding the various aspects of acquisition reform. The AST leader will also serve as the Source Selection Expert Advisor (SSEA) lead. As such, the SSEA lead will provide guidance, direction and leadership to the SSEAs within the AST organization and to source selection teams, as appropriate.

**1.8.2 CORE MEMBERS:** The core members of the AST will be a multifunctional cadre of experts that come from the following functional areas: Program/Item Management, Contracting, Engineering, Pricing, Specifications and Standards, Data Management, and Information Technology. These members will be Acquisition Professional Development Program (APDP) Level 3 certified in the functional area they represent. These individuals will have source selection experience and serve as source selection expert advisors (SSEAs) and provide real time support to program teams planning and conducting source selections or individuals or program teams conducting acquisitions. The SSEAs are allocated as follows:

- a. Acquisition Strategy Specialist: source selection expert in strategy development
  - b. Acquisition Support Specialist: source selection expert for IPT development
  - c. Engineering Specialist: source selection expert for requirement definition and performance based specifications
  - d. Program Management Specialist: source selection expert risk analysis and risk mitigation
  - e. Contracting Specialist: source selection expert for Evaluation Criteria Development and Past Performance evaluations and RFP streamlining
  - f. Market Research Specialist/Engineer: source selection expert for market research and utilization of commercial products or practices
  - g. Price Based Acquisition Specialist: source selection expert for use of price based acquisition strategies
  - h. Specification and Standards Specialist: source selection expert in use of specs and standards and configuration management issues
  - i. Information Technology Specialist: source selection expert in use of electronic source selection evaluation media and computer network design and maintenance
  - j. Contracting Source Selection Official (Contracts Committee) expert in source selection policy.
- Other experts will be recruited, as required, for unique acquisitions.

1.9 RELATIONSHIP WITH HQ AFMC/AQ: As the result of Lightning Bolt 99-1, the HQ AFMC/AQ Acquisition Support Team (AST) is re-designated as the Centralized Acquisition Support Team (CAST). The responsibilities of the CAST have also been expanded to comply with LB 99-1 and 99-2. The CAST will continue to assist the OO-ALC AST in review and support for acquisitions in excess of \$10 million. Continuous interface will be maintained with the CAST. The AST leader will also attend scheduled Acquisition Support Team Summits with the HQ AFMC/AQ director and staff to obtain and discuss information on acquisition reform issues. Any initiative or best practice presented by other center AST leaders will be evaluated for use at OO-ALC.

2.0 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS (METRICS): The integrated acquisition streamlining process was developed by the AST as a roadmap for source selection IPTs to incorporate acquisition reform into the various phases of the source selection process. The team identified eight critical output areas to accomplish this. The currently identified critical areas are as follows: IPT Development, Requirements Definition, Risk Identification and Mitigation, Evaluation Criteria (including Section L&M development), Draft RFP, RFP, Source Selection Evaluation, and Overall Assessment. Metrics to measure entrance and exit criteria, along with quality and timeliness, will be tracked in each of these critical areas. A Microsoft Access database is being created to accumulate data that will be used in measuring performance of the IPTs, and effectiveness of the services provided by the AST.

3.0 SUMMARY: This CONOPS describes the mission, purpose, objectives, operational strategy, and structure for execution of Lightning Bolt 99-1, 99-2 and 99-3 and will be effective as of 1 October 99.

  
RICHARD H. ROELLIG, Major General, USAF  
Commander